

Roll Call, July 12, 2007

Like a “Monty Python” character, Alaska’s infamous “Bridges to Nowhere” aren’t dead yet, despite taking a bloody beating.

The two Alaskan bridges to sparsely populated locations became a rallying cry for opponents of earmarks last year but have the vampiric quality of returning from the dead. Although Congress eliminated the explicit earmarks for the bridges last year, it didn’t prohibit Alaska from spending unearmarked funds on the bridges, and plans to build the bridges continue.

Appropriators on Wednesday killed an effort in committee by Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) to prohibit federal spending on the bridges.

“It appears that Congress doesn’t get the need for reform,” Kirk said after his amendment went down in a voice vote. He vowed to bring his amendment to the floor next week. “The Bridges to Nowhere are going to be built unless Congress changes its mind.”

Kirk was backed by Rep. Jack Kingston (R-Ga.), who predicted the amendment would pass overwhelmingly on the floor. “It’s going to happen,” he said.

This article was edited to comply with Franking Commission guidelines.